

ESPIONAGE

Leaks at the Top?

Except for an occasional showpiece like the process that convicted U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers three years ago, the Soviet Union has staged remarkably few important espionage trials since the Stalin purge trials in the mid-1930s. But this week, in Moscow's Supreme Court building, a British businessman will go on trial on charges of spying against the Soviet Union.

Greville Maynard Wynne, 42, was arrested in Budapest six months ago. Wynne is accused by the Russians of spying for Britain, and of having worked with Col. Oleg V. Penkovsky, 43, who, until he himself was arrested on charges of treason, was a top official of the Soviet State Committee on Coordination of Scientific Research. The Russians say that Penkovsky betrayed vital Soviet scientific secrets to Wynne and a group of U.S. diplomats (expelled last December). Penkovsky's trial will presumably be held in secret, after Wynne's, and the sensitive nature of his post has led some commentators to the conclusion that the Wynne-Penkovsky trials may prove as sensational as the Alger Hiss trial in the U.S. fifteen years ago.

In Washington last week there was speculation that Wynne and Penkovsky were implicated in an espionage network that links, interentially, at least, such luminaries as Defense Minister Marshal Rodion Y. Malinovsky and First Deputy Premier Alexei N. Kosygin. Penkovsky reportedly used Kosygin's son-in-law to reach high government officials with a plan to put all research on nuclear weapons under his own Committee. The

son-in-law got a high confidential post; Penkovsky became his deputy.

British Foreign Office officials deplored such speculation; they saw the Wynne trial as an attempt by the Russians to create a situation where they can swap Wynne for Soviet spy Gordon Arnold Lonsdale, now serving 25 years in a British jail. The British say they don't want to trade Wynne for Lonsdale because the former was a free lance with no official connections while Lonsdale is a certified Soviet agent.

The British may be right; one almost certain test of the importance of the Wynne-Penkovsky trial will be the degree of involvement, if any, of Gen. Ivan Serov, Russia's former security chief and now the director of military intelligence. Serov is believed to have been under arrest for months; if the Penkovsky case should implicate Serov then Russia may be in for a period of prolonged and explosive courtroom dramatics.

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